

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-6, 8, 9 and 11-26 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9 and 12 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of canceled claims 7 or 10 and to add new features, claims 2-6 and 12-17 are amended for clarity and/or form, new claims 18-26 are added, and claims 7 and 10 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for amended claims 1, 9 and 12 and new claims 20, 23 and 26 can be found at least in Fig. 4, for example. Support for new claims 18, 21 and 24 can be found at least at Figs. 12A and 12B, and page 33, line 24 to page 36, line 23, for example. Support for new claims 19, 22 and 25 can be found at least at Figs. 13A and 13B, and page 36, line 24 to page 37, line 25, for example. No new matter is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 7-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lobiondo (U.S. Patent No. 5,287,194) in view of Farrell (U.S. Patent No. 6,873,426); claims 2, 6, 13 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lobiondo in view of Farrell, and further in view of Akiyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,594,653, hereinafter "Akiyama"); and claims 3-5 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lobiondo in view of Farrell and further in view of well known art. The rejection of canceled claims 7 and 10 is moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of the remaining claims.

Lobiondo, Farrell, Akiyama and well known prior art, either alone or in any combination, do not disclose or suggest predetermined relation information pertaining to a plurality of types of commands, each type of command corresponding to a single source device and one or more transmission destination devices, ... the transmission destination devices being different in type from each other and from the corresponding source device, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 12.

The Office Action asserts that a buffer, a RAM or other storage means located within a print server 60 in Lobiondo is equivalent to the memory as recited in claim 1, and one of more files in database of a scheduler 50 in Lobiondo is equivalent to relation information as recited in claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Lobiondo merely discloses that the database that includes one or more files having information relating to a print job and resources on a network, and the printer file containing information relating to each printer such as printer type and quality. See column 3, line 64 to column 4, line 15 of Lobiondo. In other words, this information of Lobiondo does not include information that has plurality of types of commands, and a source device and a transmission destination device that correspond to each types of commands, let alone the transmission destination devices being different in type from each other and from the corresponding source device.

Further, Lobiondo merely discloses that the database contains the current availability of all printers on the network, and a scheduler 50 that analyzes the printers 10 on the network and determines which printers 10 are capable of producing the job. See column 4, lines 35-58 of Lobiondo. This results in Lobiondo teaching that the device receiving the print job is changed flexibly according to the circumstances. In other words, Lobiondo does not disclose that any information pertains to the print job that corresponds to the device from which that print job is transmitted and the device to which that print job is transmitted, let alone that the devices are different in type from each other.

Therefore, Lobiondo does not disclose a predetermined relation information pertaining to a plurality of types of commands, each type of command corresponding to a single source device and one or more transmission destination devices, let alone the transmission destination devices being different in type from each other and from the

corresponding source device as, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 12.

Farrell, Akiyama and well known prior art do not make up for the above-noted deficiencies of Lobiondo. Specifically, Farrell and Akiyama do not disclose the memory as recited in claim 1. Further, the Office Action merely asserts as well known prior art that a diagnosis of the state of the image forming device is requested, and notification of the state of the image forming device is performed as a result of the diagnosis.

Lobiondo, Farrell, Akiyama and well known prior art, either alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest predetermined relation information, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 12.

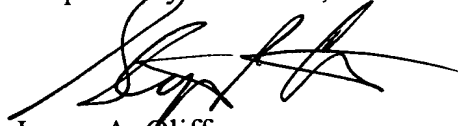
Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 9 and 12 define patentable subject matter. Claims 2-6, 8, 11 and 13-17 depend from independent claims 1, 9 and 12, and therefore also define patentable subject matter for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1-6, 8, 9 and 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Additionally, new dependent claims 18-26 depend from independent claims 1, 9 and 12, and also define patentable subject matter for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6, 8, 9 and 11-26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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